



2005
BUDGET
Investing in the Next Alberta

2005 - 06 Quarterly Budget Report

Q2 ACTIVITY REPORT

November 2005

Updating Albertans

In 2004, the government introduced its 20-year strategic plan to build on the province's strong fiscal and economic environment and create more opportunities for Albertans and Alberta businesses to succeed. *Today's Opportunities, Tomorrow's Promise* is the action plan that will help the government achieve its vision of: "A vibrant and prosperous province where Albertans enjoy a superior quality of life and are confident about the future for themselves and their children."

The strategic plan is based on four pillars:

- **Unleashing innovation** focuses on becoming a world leader in innovation, research, development, and commercialization of new ideas.
- **Leading in learning** requires making sure Albertans have the opportunities they need to learn, adapt, and develop new knowledge and new skills.
- **Competing in a global marketplace** is about creating a business and investment environment that is recognized around the world as an excellent place to do business.
- **Making Alberta the best place to live, work and visit** means attracting people to come to Alberta because it provides an environment in which they can contribute their talents and create a quality of life that meets their dreams.

The purpose of this quarterly activity report is to show Albertans what activities the government undertook over the past three months in support of this vision. The following pages include some of those activities from each of the government departments.

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LISTENING TO ALBERTANS

Government activities are often influenced by the input received from Albertans. Through public consultations, surveys, letters, phone calls, and e-mails, Albertans share their concerns with and indicate what they expect from government. In the second quarter, Albertans had a say as government:

- **launched** the public consultation phase of *A Learning Alberta*, which included an online survey to provide input from Albertans on a proposed policy framework for the advanced learning system in Alberta. In addition, eight regional stakeholder meetings were held across the province in September and October, focusing on gathering feedback on the steering committee's work. This feedback will be considered at a Minister's Forum in November. (Advanced Education)
- **established** the Environmental Protection Commission in response to the CN derailment at Lake Wabamun. The commission was established to review and make recommendations on Alberta's ability to respond to environmental incidents. A progress report was provided on September 30, and the committee's recommendations will be provided later this year. (Environment)
- **began** drafting new legislation governing childcare programs in response to the *Social Care Facilities Licensing Act* review. A discussion guide and questionnaire was published to gather input from stakeholders about what should be included in this Act. This input will be used to develop recommendations for the creation of this new legislation. (Children's Services)
- **continued** implementing recommendations from the *Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) Electricity Project Team*. Comments received during meetings with stakeholders and the general public significantly impacted the development of draft regulations for emissions trading and the mercury control program. (Environment)
- **collected** feedback on a number of key recommendations related to the development of natural gas in coal. The recommendations are from a multi-stakeholder advisory committee that was established in November 2003 and are based on technical information, feedback from Albertans, and research from working groups. The committee's final report will be presented to the Government of Alberta later this year. (Energy)
- **announced** a four per cent premium reduction in mandatory automobile insurance, effective November 1, 2005. The reduction was the result of the first review of compulsory premiums by the Automobile Insurance Rate Board, and brings total reductions to 15 per cent since the introduction of reforms. (Automobile Insurance Rate Board, Finance)
- **asked** Alberta consumers and industry leaders for input on *Working Together to Prevent Identity Theft*, a discussion paper that outlines proposed legislation to strengthen safeguards against identity theft, including measures aimed at helping the victims of such crimes. (Government Services)

- **requested** Albertans' input regarding the review of *Alberta's Employment Standards Code and Regulation*. Employment standards legislation establishes the minimum standards of employment for workers and employers. (Human Resources and Employment, HRE)
- **announced** an MLA-led committee review of the *Local Authorities Election Act*. This enhanced review will focus on local election procedures and issues, including voter lists and identification, special ballots, campaign advertising, and terms of office. (Municipal Affairs)
- **provided** advice and information on natural gas and electricity topics to approximately 7900 Albertans through the Government of Alberta toll-free information services. (Public Affairs Bureau; Energy; Government Services)
- **supported** the *MLA Task Force on Continuing Health Service and Accommodation Standards* with its public consultations, as well as its report and draft recommendations. (Seniors and Community Supports; Health and Wellness)
- **compiled and released** the results of 3,400 survey responses to the discussion guide for the legislative review of the *Dependent Adults Act* and *Personal Directives Act*. The input will be used to frame discussion questions for public consultation sessions held in October and November 2005. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **facilitated** community information and education sessions for Piikani Nation service providers to discuss the risk to Aboriginal and First Nations people of sustaining brain injuries. (Seniors and Community Supports).
- **scheduled** 30 lodge standard surveys to identify and share best practices and evaluate each lodge's level of compliance with the accommodation standards as set out in the draft report from the *MLA Task Force on Continuing Care Health Service and Accommodation Standards*. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **consulted** with Albertans on a proposed *Forest Management Planning Standard*, setting out the requirements for industry forest management plans on Alberta's public land. The new standard will advance the province's ability to manage Alberta's forests for sustainability and ensure sound stewardship of our forests. (Sustainable Resource Development, SRD)

UNLEASHING INNOVATION/COMPETING IN A GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

Albertans are pioneers - known for innovative thinking and a "can do" attitude. It's this spirit that makes Alberta a leader on so many fronts. Focusing on research, technology, and innovation will allow Albertans to maximize traditional industries and broaden Alberta's economy.

Low taxes and the availability of untapped markets to export and promote our goods, services, knowledge, and technology play a vital part in achieving recognition as an excellent place to do business. Making Alberta's infrastructure the best in the world is also important, so citizens and businesses have the foundation they need to compete in a global marketplace. In the second quarter, the government:

- **opened** an Alberta Education Centre in Guadalajara, Mexico, and signed a new *Memorandum of Understanding* with the state of Jalisco's Secretariat of Education. Representatives from Alberta participated in meetings with the country's senior government representatives and promoted Alberta's post-secondary sector to partner institutions and businesses. (Advanced Education)
- **opened** the new Agri-Food Business Centre in Leduc to help Alberta's agri-food entrepreneurs develop business skills and get more Alberta food products on grocery shelves and onto Albertans' plates. (Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, AFRD)
- **announced** a plan to target age verification of all young cattle slaughtered in Alberta processing plants by April 1, 2007, which will help establish Alberta as a leader in cattle age verification and industry innovation. (AFRD)
- **resumed** movement of live Canadian cattle less than 30 months of age across the U.S. border, after 789 days of border closures, by working closely with federal and U.S. governments. (AFRD)
- **amended** regulations in the *Cooperatives Act* to allow farmers' markets to raise and pool capital funds, which allows for larger sales venues and permanent facilities. (AFRD)
- **completed** a pilot project to test the use of mobile computers for use by claims adjusters in the field. The technology will lead to increased accuracy, cost savings, and decreased turnaround times on claims payments. (Agriculture Financial Services Corporation, AFSC)
- **introduced** the concept of production insurance for livestock to livestock associations in Alberta. Production insurance for livestock can help strengthen the industry by stabilizing income after losses due to diseases or weather-related events. (AFSC)
- **approved** two loans, totalling \$240,000, under the *Beef Product and Market Development Loan Program* to assist with beef processing and increase slaughter capacity in Alberta. (AFSC)
- **hosted** 200 international scientists during the *Dinosaur Park Symposium* held at the Royal Tyrrell Museum. Delegates discussed the significance of Alberta's badlands and celebrated the 20th anniversary of the museum and the 50th anniversary of Dinosaur Provincial Park. (Community Development)

- **commissioned** a *Bitumen Upgrading Integration Study* to identify the most appropriate combination of products to make from bitumen in Alberta. The study will describe the most cost effective plant and processes, and estimate costs and revenues. This information will then be used to prepare a compelling business case for upgrading bitumen to transportation fuels, petrochemicals, and fertilizers in Alberta. (Economic Development; Energy; Innovation and Science)
- **released** *ST60B-2005: Upstream Petroleum Industry Flaring and Venting Report*, which reported a nine per cent reduction in solution gas flaring and an 18 per cent reduction in the venting of solution gas into the atmosphere by industry in 2004. Solution gas is natural gas that is produced in association with crude oil and bitumen production. Since 1996, solution gas flaring has been reduced by 72 per cent, and, since 2000, solution gas venting has been reduced by 49 per cent. (Energy and Utilities Board, EUB)
- **released** the *Alberta's Reserves 2004 and Supply/Demand Outlook 2005-2014* report. The report includes estimates of bitumen, crude oil, natural gas, natural gas liquids, coal, and sulphur reserves, as well as production volumes for 2004 and a 10-year supply/demand forecast for each resource. The complete report can be found on the EUB Web site at www.alis.gov.ab.ca. (EUB)
- **streamlined** regulations by implementing three new codes of practice and amending seven regulations. The new codes regulate more than 250 registrations and approvals affecting compost facilities, waste management activities, and coal and oil sands exploration activities. (Environment)
- **implemented** a series of securities reforms, including amendments forming the initial steps of a securities regulation passport system, in conjunction with other provinces and territories. The reforms make it easier for businesses to access capital markets in most Canadian jurisdictions. The Provincial-Territorial Council of Ministers of Securities Regulation, chaired by Alberta, met in September to approve a work plan for further reforms to enhance investor protection and improve the efficiency of Canada's capital markets over the next year. (Finance)
- **participated** in the *Global Gaming Expo (G2E)*, which focused on the latest trends in responsible gaming research, problem gambling treatment, public policy, and global gaming trends. (Gaming)
- **announced** \$143 million in funding to digitize X-rays and CT and MRI scans, allowing doctors and patients faster access to reports and images, thereby improving the quality of care available to Albertans. The project will also allow hospitals and clinics across the province to share images through the *Electronic Health Record*. (Health and Wellness)
- **increased** Alberta's minimum wage from \$5.90 to \$7.00/hour. (HRE)
- **recognized** 340 Alberta employers with *Best Safety Performance Awards* for their exceptional workplace health and safety records. In addition, three companies were recognized with *Innovation Awards* for developing innovative workplace safety equipment practices. (HRE)
- **released** the *2005 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey*, representing more than 300,000 full-time and part-time employees and nearly 480 occupations. Alberta is the only province in Canada to regularly produce a wage and salary survey. The survey is available online at www.alis.gov.ab.ca/wageinfo. (HRE)
- **committed** \$40 million to complete a new all-weather road between La Loche, Saskatchewan and Fort McMurray, Alberta. The La Loche Road project will produce a 65-kilometre gravel road from Highway 881 to the Saskatchewan border, including a major bridge crossing at the Christina River. (Infrastructure and Transportation)
- **launched** *Science and Technology Week 2005*. As part of the campaign, *Science and Technology Week* packages were distributed to Alberta schools to provide teachers with information on science and technology programs for students. The goal for the annual event is to encourage Alberta students to consider careers in science and technology and become part of the province's innovation community. (Innovation and Science)
- **hosted** *2005 Innovation and Investment Week*. During the event, national and international investors had the opportunity to meet with growing Alberta companies to learn about the province's investment prospects in areas such as information and communications technologies and life sciences technologies. More than 300 Alberta entrepreneurs were introduced to Canadian and American investors at events including the *Alberta Life Technologies Investment Forum* and the *Banff Venture Forum*. (Innovation and Science)

- **co-hosted** a *Canada-China Heavy Oil Workshop* with the China National Petroleum Corporation, China University of Petroleum, and Canada's national Energy Innovation Network (EnergyINet). The workshop focused on advances in exploration, development, and production of heavy oil. The Canadian contingent of 29 specialist in all aspects of heavy oil recovery and upgrading was led by Mel Knight, MLA for Grande Prairie-Smoky and co-Chair of the Alberta Energy Research Institute Board. (Innovation and Science; Energy; Economic Development)
- **chaired** the *Council of the Federation* summer meeting, where Premiers from across Canada acted on a number of issues, including transportation, energy, and post-secondary education and training. Canada-U.S. relations and the softwood lumber dispute were also discussed with the new U.S. Ambassador. (International and Intergovernmental Relations, IIR)
- **advanced** Alberta's objectives on energy, agriculture, and Canada-U.S. relations to government and business leaders from the Pacific Northwest at the annual meeting of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. (IIR)
- **promoted** Alberta's energy industry at the *World Petroleum Congress* in South Africa. During the congress, Premier Klein met with the leader of Alberta's sister-province, Mpumalanga, to discuss continued co-operation. He also met with German business leaders and learned about Ireland's world-leading health infrastructure system. (IIR; Economic Development; Energy; Advanced Education)
- **hosted** Mexican President Vicente Fox, who visited Alberta to learn more about the province's energy industry and reinforce his country's close ties with Alberta. Mexico is Alberta's fourth largest trading partner, with annual trade amounting to \$1 billion. (IIR)
- **initiated** an assessor internship pilot project with Saddle Hills County to help attract and retain qualified property assessment professionals. (Municipal Affairs)
- **completed** the *Alberta SuperNet*, a broadband network that provides high-speed Internet access to all provincial buildings, including schools, libraries, health facilities, and government offices. The network also has the capacity to bring high-speed Internet access to more than 86 per cent of Albertans, making it a key factor in rural Alberta's social and economic development. (Restructuring and Government Efficiency, RGE)
- **provided** *SuperNet* workshop sessions in Whitecourt, Cochrane, and Medicine Hat. These workshops were part of a series and offered more than 100 community leaders and business owners with opportunities to learn more about the *Alberta SuperNet*. (RGE)
- **improved** management of surface development activities on public land, with a new digital disposition mapping project. This automated system ensures more effective land use and access management, provides greater certainty to industry about the location of dispositions, and helps reduce user conflicts. (SRD)

LEADING IN LEARNING

Albertans know a solid education builds the foundation for a strong and prosperous society. Alberta's education system continues to be among the best in the world and staying at the forefront means providing students with the tools they need to achieve their potential. Investments in universities, colleges, and technical institutes are increasing, so they can provide high quality, affordable post-secondary education. This, in turn, creates opportunities for life-long learners to adapt their skills and develop new ones. A well-educated workforce is key to Alberta's continued economic success. In the second quarter, the government:

- **approved** degree-granting status for Grant MacEwan College for four-year Bachelor of Arts degrees in Anthropology, Economics, English, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology, as well as a four-year Bachelor of Child and Youth Care degree program. This provides more opportunities for students to reach their full potential and increases access for students entering Alberta's post-secondary system. (Advanced Education)
- **launched** a new student loan application system, the first of its kind in Canada. The new system allows post-secondary students to apply online for financial assistance, have their application processed instantaneously, and immediately see how much money they will receive. Full-time students attending private vocational institutions can also use this convenient new system. Albertans applying online for student loans, grants and bursaries now have access to a greater range of faster, more flexible and user-friendly electronic services. (Advanced Education)
- **announced** \$145 million, over three years, in new capital funding for projects at post-secondary institutions. Projects included a \$29 million expansion to Red Deer College, providing more space for trades training to help meet a growing demand in the region for skilled labour, and a \$12 million project at the University of Lethbridge, enabling it to become a world leader in water research. Other projects included expansions or renovations at Grande Prairie Regional College, Lakeland College, Medicine Hat College, SAIT, and the University of Calgary. Overall, the province's 2005-08 capital plan now includes \$614 million for post-secondary institutions. (Advanced Education; Infrastructure and Transportation)
- **released** *Our Children, Our Future*, the 2003-04 Annual Report on early childhood development and childcare. The report provides information about how the provincial government supports early childhood development programs and services, as well as discussions on various provincial early learning and childcare initiatives. (Children's Services)
- **announced** \$207 million in funding towards 22 school projects in 14 communities. Up to \$15.5 million in contingency funding was also committed to offset rising fuel costs for school bus operations for the 2005-06 school year. (Education)

- **provided** \$6 million to support the effective implementation of a new social studies curriculum that focuses on Canadian identity and citizenship for grades four to seven. (Education)
- **developed** the *First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework Progress Report*, to be made publicly available on the Alberta Education website. (Education)
- **announced** \$338,000 in bursaries to 78 Aboriginal students to advance their studies in a health-related field of post-secondary study. (Health and Wellness; Advanced Education)
- **allocated** new funding for school boards towards infrastructure maintenance and renewal, bringing the three-year total to \$224 million. The commitment for 2007-08 was increased by 140 per cent, from \$40 million to \$96 million. (Infrastructure and Transportation)

MAKING ALBERTA THE BEST PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT

Albertans' vision is one in which the province remains debt-free, with accessible, quality health care and education, safe and caring communities, and an environment that is preserved and protected. Alberta is a place that has something for everyone. The province is known for its spectacular scenery, rich cultural heritage and exciting history. Those attractions draw visitors from around the world and keep them coming back year after year. In the second quarter, the government:

Promoting Health and Wellness

- **introduced** the *Daily Physical Activity* initiative, the first part of an overall wellness framework being developed for Alberta schools. The initiative ensures students in grades one through nine take part in 30 minutes of physical activity each day as part of their curriculum. (Education)
- **released** the *Getting on with Better Health Care* package, which outlines 13 health renewal initiatives for 2005 and 2006. (Health and Wellness)
- **informed** Albertans about incidents of West Nile virus and the precautions they can take to protect themselves. (Health and Wellness; Environment; SRD; AFRD; Municipal Affairs)
- **committed** \$2.5 million to the renovation and upgrading of the Airdrie Community Health Centre. (Infrastructure and Transportation)
- **completed** regional mental health plans to strengthen strategies that address the needs of individuals diagnosed with more than one disability. (Seniors and Community Supports; Alberta Mental Health Board)

Supporting Families and Children

- **established** a childcare agreement with the federal government that allows Alberta to invest in a variety of service delivery options that build on new and existing parental-support programs. (Children's Services)
- **concluded** the final stage of funding increases for foster parents. Changes implemented earlier this year include increases to basic maintenance, respite, travel, and subsistence rates, and an increase in recreational allowance for foster children. (Children's Services)
- **supported** 450 young athletes and coaches to compete at the 2005 Canada Summer Games in Regina. Team Alberta won 100 medals in the 20 events, a best-ever result in this competition. (Community Development)
- **published** the second edition of *Saving the World Begins at Home, a Personal Guide to Managing Household Waste*. This popular booklet assists Albertans in making better decisions at home about what to buy, how to dispose of it, how to minimize waste, and how to help protect our environment. (Environment)

- **completed** renovations to the Lac La Biche Labour Market Information Centre. The centre now has more computers and resources for job-seeking Albertans and can better assist employers looking for workers. (HRE)
- **signed** phase two of the *Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program*, which committed a total of \$63 million over the next two years to create a minimum of 440 supportive and affordable living units. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **conducted** more than 100 presentations across Alberta to educate Albertans about personal directives, the *Personal Directives Act*, and how to make choices for the future. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **launched** a program to welcome visitors to Royal Canadian Legions throughout Alberta, in recognition of our centennial year and the Year of the Veteran. Ten provincially operated Travel Alberta Visitor Information Centres and participating community information centres distributed Legion directories to visitors. (Economic Development)
- **delivered** two *Foreign Worker Readiness* information seminars, in partnership with regional alliances. The purpose of the seminars was to educate Alberta employers about the process of hiring foreign workers to meet labour market shortages, and retaining temporary foreign workers through the *Provincial Nominee Program*. (Economic Development)
- **launched** four anti-bullying demonstration projects in an effort to help Albertans reduce and deal effectively with bullying. (Education)

Building Stronger and Safer Communities

- **gathered** research and evidence during discussions with leading experts in the fields of domestic violence and drug-endangered children. The information will be used to determine if the programs and services discussed would be beneficial to Albertans. (Children's Services)
- **held** a special centennial event to celebrate the achievements of *Alberta's Promise* and award 60 new partner agencies with little red wagons. During the event, a new video was launched that will help spread the *Alberta's Promise* message and recruit new partners. (Children's Services)
- **celebrated** Alberta's centennial on September 1st with *AlbertaSpirit*, a province-wide event linking ten communities through video screens and simultaneous fireworks. About 250,000 people came together with television and webcast audiences for the party of the century. (Community Development)
- **raised** the curtain on the renewed Northern and Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditoria. Both facilities were renovated to improve accessibility, patron sightlines, and acoustics. The 'Jubes' served as focal points for Alberta's centennial celebrations on September 1st. (Community Development)
- **featured** Alberta musicians in 10 rural communities as part of *Alberta Tracks: A Centennial Music Celebration*. Alberta Tracks presented a line-up of diverse acts and concerts to approximately 5,000 people in small towns across Alberta. (Community Development)
- **continued** the June 2005 flood response by processing flood damage repairs and erosion control approvals, drafting the *Southern Region Emergency Plan* strategy, and reviewing flood risk mapping. (Environment)
- **responded** to the CN derailment and resulting Wabamun Lake oil spill. More than 80 Environment and Sustainable Resource Development staff helped, among other things, co-ordinate and review CN's cleanup effort and monitoring plans, assist the *Shoreline Clean-Up Assessment Team*, and design, manage, and report on lake water quality monitoring. They, along with other organizations, also played a major role in habitat restoration and rehabilitating affected wildlife. (Environment; SRD)
- **issued** more than 480 *Community Facility Enhancement Program* and *Community Initiatives Program* grants through the Alberta Lottery Fund. These grants support various projects throughout the province, including everything from facility repairs to specialized summer camp programs. (Gaming)
- **approved** the development of a new casino for the Stoney Nakoda First Nation near Kananaskis. The casino will generate employment and funds for social, economic, and community development projects throughout the province. (Gaming)
- **issued** consumer alerts on a range of topics including e-mail scams, student tenants, and how to ensure consumers are dealing with legitimate charities. (Government Services)

- **opened** two new interchanges in the province - one at Innisfail on the Queen Elizabeth II Highway and one at Spruce Grove on Highway 16. These two interchanges, which were built at a total cost of \$49 million, will greatly improve driver safety at these intersections. (Infrastructure and Transportation)
- **added** Crown prosecutors to the St. Paul-Vegreville office, providing more local service in rural communities and allowing Edmonton prosecutors to focus on cases within the city. (Justice)
- **announced** a new disputes mediation program for Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, making mediation more accessible across the province. (Justice)
- **approved** 208 grants, totalling \$8.43 million, under the *2005 Municipal Sponsorship Program*. More than \$1.53 million of that grant total was awarded to municipal infrastructure data collection projects. (Municipal Affairs)
- **provided** \$1.56 million in interest-free loans to 15 municipalities through the *Municipal Energy Efficiency Assistance Program (ME first!)*. These loans will help municipalities achieve approximately \$225,000 per year in energy cost savings. The *ME first! Program* supports initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and incorporate energy efficiencies into municipal operations. (Municipal Affairs)
- **provided** funding through the Homeless Initiative Program towards the purchase and renovation of Elderberry House in Calgary, a residential facility that will offer shelter for 16 women facing addictions, mental health issues, and/or family violence. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **introduced** a request for proposals to sell a 371-acre parcel of land in Fort McMurray to increase the availability of land for housing, with an overall goal of helping to stabilize the housing market. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **provided** \$300,000 in new funding to the *Wapiti Community Dorm* and the *Elders Caring Shelter*, two homeless shelters in Grande Prairie that help address emergency housing concerns and ensure the ongoing operations of these facilities. (Seniors and Community Supports)
- **announced** that all 1,100 provincial frontline correctional staff will be outfitted with stab-resistant protective vests, making Alberta the first province in Canada to provide frontline correctional staff with this type of body armour. (Solicitor General and Public Security)
- **provided** more than \$600,000 in *Alberta Community Crime Prevention* grants to organizations across the province. The grant program is part of the government's renewed crime prevention strategy to deliver programs that deter crime, promote community safety, and address the root causes of crime. (Solicitor General and Public Security)
- **led** a 10-day mission to the United Kingdom to assess policing programs and public security initiatives. The mission included meetings with law enforcement officials to discuss police recruitment and training, public security operations, counter-terrorism planning, strategies to combat organized crime, and utilization of special constables. (Solicitor General and Public Security)
- **awarded** 13 grants totalling \$335,000 to help organizations hold offenders accountable to their victims and communities. Restorative justice is a voluntary, collaborative approach in which victims feel safe and empowered, offenders are held accountable, and communities are involved. (Solicitor General and Public Security)

Protecting Alberta's Natural and Cultural Heritage

- **executed** an exchange agreement with the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation. The agreement provides the First Nation with a reserve of about 30,000 acres at one of its traditional settlements, Old Fort Point, in exchange for an equal amount of its existing reserve. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, AAND)
- **implemented** the *Fort McKay Exchange*, providing the Fort McKay First Nation with a reserve where its members currently live, in exchange for their original, unoccupied reserve. (AAND)

- **provided** a total of 36 centennial grants to Aboriginal communities and organizations. The grants were awarded to support the celebration of the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Alberta's past, present and future. In this quarter, 18 centennial celebrations were held. (AAND)
- **promoted** homegrown regional food products through dining experiences at more than 90 provincial restaurants during the third-annual *Dine Alberta: Savour Regional Flavour* celebration. (AFRD)
- **renewed** three-year funding for both the Alberta SPCA and Alberta Farm Animal Care, strengthening farm animal welfare protection, programs, and education. (AFRD)
- **commenced** construction of a visitor centre in Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park, a government centennial legacy project. The facility will encourage awareness and understanding of the region's flora and fauna through interactive exhibits and programs. (Community Development)
- **worked** with industry to promote and present the *Hybrid Lift Vehicle*, an unmanned aerial vehicle concept, to the oil and gas industry. The vehicle would minimize the environmental impact of oilfield equipment transport. (Economic Development)
- **presented** the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum with \$3 million from the Alberta Lottery Fund to redevelop a historic downtown Edmonton hotel into a museum. (Gaming)
- **chaired** a meeting of Canada's Premiers and Aboriginal leaders. The meeting was an opportunity for leaders to discuss their views and expectations prior to this fall's First Minister's Meeting on Aboriginal issues. (IIR)
- **distributed** special 2005 Centennial Medallions as a permanent souvenir of the province's 100th birthday. Approximately 500 Albertans 100 years of age or older received a gold medallion, 700,000 Alberta children in kindergarten to Grade 12 were given a student medallion, and 5,500 community leaders and visiting dignitaries received a silver medallion. (Public Affairs Bureau)
- **managed** mountain pine beetle infestations, primarily in Willmore Wilderness Park and Kakwa Wildland Provincial Park. Efforts included the cutting and burning of more than 5,000 infested trees. (SRD; Community Development)
- **implemented** the chronic wasting disease response plan following the first case of the disease found in a wild deer in the province. Alberta's response included meetings with residents and a significant wild deer cull. (SRD)
- **established** the *Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Office* to look for ways to better co-ordinate natural resource and environmental policies, information systems, regulations and processes across government. (SRD; Energy; Environment)



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